


MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for
Intelligence

Attached is a brief item which we have
run in this week's issue of the FBIS TRENDS
concerning Communist reaction to the
Watergate business.

Also attached is a more detailed rundown
of the nature of this reaction. We have
made no dissemination of the detailed paper
except to send a copy to the Director of OCI.


E. H. KNOCHE
Director
Foreign Broadcast Information Service
(DATE)
2 May 1973

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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[IN THE "NOTES" SECTION OF THE FBIS TRENDS OF 2 MAY]

WATERGATE DEVELOPMENTS: Neither Moscow nor Peking has mentioned the White House staff resignations or President Nixon's 30 April address on the Watergate affair. Peking has been silent from the outset, and Moscow's earlier coverage was negligible. The last monitored mention in Soviet media was on 29 April, when PRAVDA carried a TASS report on FBI Director Gray's resignation. Other communist media have shown less reticence. Reports of the latest events have been monitored from all the East European countries except Albania and Bulgaria. Some harsh comment has come from East Germany and Czechoslovakia in particular, playing up the involvement of top-level White House officials and reporting dissatisfaction in the United States over the President's handling of the affair. By and large, however, East European media have treated the President's personal role in a gingerly fashion. Vietnamese communist media, by contrast, have cited Western sources to depict the President's national leadership role as "threatened." Hanoi radio on 1 May cited the BBC in observing that "the future of some high-ranking officials, and probably that of President Nixon himself, seems to be at stake." Havana has commented caustically and at length, with PRENSA LATINA saying on 1 May that the affair had by no means reached its culmination and that evidence implicating the President himself was likely to emerge.

2 May 1973

COMMUNIST REACTION TO WATERGATE DEVELOPMENTS

Moscow and Peking have remained silent to date on the White House staff resignations and President Nixon's 30 April speech on the Watergate affair. Moscow had reported some earlier developments in the Watergate case, but Peking had ignored it from the outset. North Korea, like the PRC, has remained silent. By contrast, most of the East European countries, North Vietnam, and Cuba have promptly reported the recent developments and commented on them.

THE USSR Moscow's earlier coverage of developments in the Watergate case was negligible. PRAVDA on 19 April published a factual TASS dispatch on the President's 17 April statement about "major developments" in the case, though TASS' international services are not known to have carried the item. The PRAVDA report presented the affair strictly in terms of domestic political rivalry and reported the measures announced by the President to further the investigation. On 28 April, TASS reported FBI Director Gray's resignation in connection with Watergate and President Nixon's appointment of Ruckelshaus to replace him. PRAVDA carried the report on the 29th. There has been no Soviet reportage on the case since then.

EAST EUROPE Bulgaria and Albania are the only East European countries not known to have reported the most recent developments. Polish and Romanian broadcast media carried brief factual reports of the 30 April events, while East German, Czechoslovak, and Hungarian media reported at greater length and commented on U.S. domestic reaction. Most East European reaction skirted the issue of Presidential involvement, but East Germany and Czechoslovakia--characteristically harsher than the others in the Soviet bloc--played up the involvement of top-level White House officials and reported that there was dissatisfaction in the United States over the President's handling of the affair.

East European media for the most part did not dwell on the possible implications of Watergate either for domestic politics or for the U.S. position in world affairs. Only Budapest reported, in passing, the remarks on U.S. foreign policy goals in the President's 30 April speech. But Budapest radio concluded only that the United States had "exposed its worst political features to the world." ADN reported a commentary in the GDR youth paper JUNGE WELT which played down the

possibility of major domestic ramifications, including a move by some to impeach the President, since "even Nixon's opponents in the Democratic Party are ultimately in the same boat." Watergate, the paper said, is thus "a Waterloo only for people in the United States and elsewhere who still believe in the honesty and democratic nature of the imperialist system."

Belgrade radio said the President would now try to convince domestic opponents not to capitalize on the Watergate developments, in order to minimize its impact on the U.S. position in upcoming talks with Brezhnev and West European leaders and in international forums.

THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS Hanoi and PRG media during the past week have carried reports--credited to Western news sources--calculated to point up the difficulties the Watergate developments pose for President Nixon. For example, a Liberation Radio broadcast on 26 April cited Western newspapers as commenting that the President's political apparatus has become almost paralyzed and that his role as national leader might be "threatened." A Hanoi broadcast on 1 May, citing the BBC as its source, observed that "the future of some high-ranking officials, and probably that of President Nixon himself, seems to be at stake." Like some other Vietnamese communist broadcasts, it suggested that "even Kissinger has become involved, because modifications are to be made in U.S. foreign and domestic policies." Liberation Radio on 28 April took note of an AFP report which it said indicated that an Administration group "entirely loyal" to the President had been most seriously involved in the Watergate case and that Kissinger was the leader of another such group composed of diplomats. A disparaging report on President Nixon's 30 April address was carried on 2 May by Hanoi radio, which said the President had "accepted the blame for the Watergate affair in hopes of appeasing the American public's indignation over this vicious political spying case." A similar report of the speech over Liberation radio concluded by quoting AFP as saying that Thieu is reportedly concerned lest U.S. domestic political problems affect American policy in South Vietnam.

CUBA Havana has followed the Watergate developments closely and has commented caustically and at length on both Presidential statements. A domestic radio commentary on 26 April and a commentary carried by PRENSA LATINA on 1 May both emphasized that the Watergate affair had by no means reached its culmination and that further evidence linking the President himself to the affair would likely emerge.

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